

Memo

To: Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Lindsey Guindi, Director of Strategic Projects
Date: March 5, 2015
Re: Health and Wellness Area Plan

In December 2013, the City of Bryan, in partnership with St. Joseph Health System, announced its intentions to engage in an area-wide planning process to develop a clear, concise vision and associated goals for the area around St. Joseph Regional Health Center and a Health and Wellness Area Plan that would assist in implementation of the vision and associated goals by setting priorities through 2025. In spring 2014, the City of Bryan entered into a contract with a planning team led by Memphis, TN-based Looney Ricks Kiss to create the Bryan, TX Health and Wellness Area Plan. The team focused on creating opportunities to integrate planning and design of a growing health and wellness district with community design concepts promoting healthy, active lifestyles in order to create an innovative Health and Wellness Area Plan whose character resonates with and supports world-class employers and employees.

Over the past two decades, health and wellness districts have emerged as key elements of sustainable economic growth and vibrant community development for cities. Healthcare providers, such as hospitals and healthcare related entities like research centers, can serve as larger-scale employment centers and stimulate demand for ancillary retail services. Neighborhoods and communities can benefit from the anchoring characteristics of these institutions and the economic activity that they generate. Through innovative and creative planning processes, forward-thinking municipalities are harnessing the growth potential of these health and wellness districts to revitalize surrounding neighborhoods and build upon the economic development opportunities offered by attracting and retaining human capital.

More recently, urban planning and public health professionals have begun to better understand the incredibly rich relationship that exists between the places where we live, work, and play, and our physical and mental well-being. The design of our built environment offers us opportunities to improve health outcomes and increase active living for existing residents, as well as to create healthy places that attract people of all ages and appeal to a skilled workforce and innovative, growth-oriented companies.

As part of the City of Bryan Health and Wellness Area planning process, existing resources and opportunities were identified and strategies for capitalizing upon these strengths developed. Specific strategies to address constraints currently inhibiting economic development in the area and preferred alternative(s) for development are included in the plan.

The planning effort also considered land use, transportation, and district appearance and identity. The land use plan makes recommendations that support valid economic development strategies for the area, as well as support development of a distinctive health and wellness district where people want to live, work, and play.

The draft Health and Wellness Plan was released to the public on February 19, 2015. The draft plan can be downloaded for review at <http://www.bryanwellnessplan.com/the-plan/>. The Planning and Zoning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation on the Plan. The Plan is tentatively scheduled for consideration at the April 14, 2015 Bryan City Council Meeting.